

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 55

By Coley

A RESOLUTION to create a special joint committee to study present law relative to abolition, consolidation, dissolution, merger, and transfer of administration of existing school districts as well as the creation or establishment of a new school district.

WHEREAS, Tennessee's current statutes concerning the consolidation of school systems were enacted nearly fifty years ago. Other provisions concerning abolition, merger, and transfer of administration of school districts are more than fifty years old; and

WHEREAS, the possible consolidation, merger, or transfer of administration of a school district or the establishment of a new school district are very serious and complex issues which should require the development of comprehensive and clear plans of action as prescribed by a concise state law that must include an appropriate level of state oversight; and

WHEREAS, a thorough review and study of the laws and procedures pertaining to school district abolition, consolidation, merger, or transfer of administration as well as those laws relative to the creation of a new school district is in order; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that a special joint committee of the general assembly be appointed to review and study all relevant statutes in the Tennessee Code Annotated that govern the abolition, transfer of administration, consolidation, or merger of school districts and those laws that govern the establishment and creation of a new school district in Tennessee, including the role of state government and state agencies in both diminution and addition of school systems.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of the current process as set forth in statute as to consolidation or transfer of

existing administration, staff, faculty, real property, and other property controlled by the merging school systems and to make recommendations that would bring greater efficiency to the process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such study shall also review the current authority of the department of education and the state board of education in such situations, including the appropriate level of oversight, guidance, and assistance that they should provide.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee shall consist of five (5) members of the house of representatives and five (5) members of the senate, to be appointed by the respective speakers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee may call upon the department of education, the state board of education, and the comptroller's office of research and education accountability or other state governmental departments and agencies for any necessary assistance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all legislative members of the special joint committee who are duly elected members of the general assembly shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its findings and recommendations to the general assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special joint committee shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the general assembly, and at its first meeting shall elect a chair, vice-chair, and such other officers the committee deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special joint committee shall timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the One Hundred Seventh General Assembly no later than January 10, 2012, at which time the committee shall cease to exist.